

NEWINGTON TOWN HALL
131 CEDAR STREET
CONFERENCE ROOM THREE
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3, 2010
7:00 p.m.

I. MEMBERS PRESENT

Chairman Thomas Shields
Commissioner Thomas Bowen
Commissioner Kevin Chick
Commissioner Val Ginn, alternate, sitting in for M. Gerhart
Commissioner James Marocchini
Commissioner David Marsden, alternate, not seated
Commissioner Greg Polk
Commissioner Dana Woods
Commissioner Fernando Rosa, alternate, not seated

Commissioner Michael Gerhart, absent
Commissioner Mary Niro, absent
Commissioner Michael Longo, absent

Town Planner, Ed Meehan - present

II. MEETING MINUTES February 3, 2010

Commissioner Chick moved that the minutes of the regular meeting of February 3, be accepted. It was seconded by Commissioner Marocchini. The motion carried unanimously.

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. BUSINESS CALL PROGRAM

Chairman Shields noted that the largest businesses in the districts would receive visits from Mayor Jeff Wright and Town Manager Salamone but he also encouraged that all of the assigned districts be visited by the commissioners with the results reported to this commission.

Town Planner Ed Meehan added that there is a form letter which he will provide to all members with the business listings for each district but that technical questions should be referred to the proper town hall officials.

B. NATIONAL WELDING

Mr. Meehan summarized that the Town filed for a municipal brownfield remediation grant on March 1, 2010 for \$1.3 million dollars. After the cleanup, requests for qualifications later this Spring will go out, depending on the DOT and Hayes-Kaufman signing a letter of agreement for all parties to cooperate in sharing drainage, utility corridors and road construction to Fenn road. The Town Council/Board of education and CIP committee has proposed to allocate \$450,000.00 starting July 1st towards the town's participation with Conn DOT and Mr. Hayes to construct part of the road and traffic signal to control access into that site. Cedar Street toward Fenn Road should be addressed in development plans.

C. NEWINGTON OPEN FOR BUSINESS BREAKFAST

With the consensus of the commissioners, Chairman Shields set a date of May 21, 2010 for having a breakfast at Indian Hill Country Club with a guest speaker.

V, OLD BUSINESS

A. STATUS OF THE MUNICIPAL PARKING LOT IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Mr. Meehan reported that the Town council completed its appointments to the Downtown Revitalization committee which includes Chris Banach, Myra Cohen, Michael Gerhart, Michael Lenares, James Marochinni, Scott McBride and Thomas Shields. The Town Council passed two resolutions allocating funds to complete the east side of the parking lot which amounted to \$168,000.00 and the CIP committee is recommending \$225,000.00 for a total of \$385,000.00 to complete the easterly side of the municipal parking lot. Quality Associates have been approved a bid of \$495,000.00 value engineering reduction of \$60,000.00, bringing it to \$435,000.00 and elimination of the interim design plan will save an additional \$50,000.00.

Approval for Market Square includes \$350,000.00 in STEAP funds, phase IV and the CIP committee recommended \$350,000.00 for the 2010-11 CIP for a total of \$700,000.00 for Market Square with a contract signing once the Town Council has passed the budget after July 1, 2010.

B. DISCUSSION OF DRAFT #3 2020 PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Meehan noted that the TPZ is still working toward Draft #3 and expect to wrap up the draft revisions March 10,2010; Draft #3 will be put on the Town web page and then

referred to the Town Council with the public hearing process set for April, hoping this plan will be adopted in late April or early May 2010.

C. DOWNTON BUSINESS ASSOCIATION REPORT – VAL GINN

Commissioner Ginn reported that the association is still working on the by-laws which will be discussed on March 11, 2010. In May the DBA will be having the Memorial Day parade, in June there is Cruising Newington, in July there is the Extravaganza, and in September the Waterfall Festival. In August there may be a Hot August Night in downtown Newington involving the restaurants. There are 72 members and its web site is www.dbanewington.com.

Commissioner Bowen noted that downtown businesses want better signage, somewhat like Mall signs at various locations and Commissioner Ginn agreed that this problem should be resolved. Commissioner Polk agreed that there should be a strong focus on a well designed sign, with approval by the TPZ.

D. BUSINESS SHOWCASE, MARCH 19-20, 2010

Chairman Shields noted that the Town will have its booth set up on March 19, 2010 and encouraged members to volunteer for set up, manning the booth and breakdown. Commissioner Bowen suggested a display for the Busway project at Fenn Road and Newington junction.

V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Rose Lyons of 46 Elton Drive spoke of her concern regarding the municipal parking lot at Constitution Square and the improvements of Market Square – including better signage, plus repair of the potholes in this area and its maintenance, indicating a need for a more diligent maintenance.

VI. REMARKS BY COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Ginn announced she has resigned from the commission and thanked everyone for their service in working with her on her projects but will continue with the Downtown Business Association. Commissioner Bowen thanked Commissioner Ginn for her service to this commission.

Commissioner Bowen noted that businesses are closing in town and encouraged Mr. Meehan to provide an exit interview and a list of these businesses. Commissioner Polk pointed to the designated areas that all of the commissioners have to be responsible for and to approach these businesses on a regular basis. Commissioner Bowen also was concerned about vacant buildings, especially on the Berlin Turnpike.

Commissioner Bowen also received an e-mail regarding survey work near Ella Grasso Drive which Mr. Meehan noted he is meeting with a person interested in developing this

property. Commissioner Bowen commended Rose Lyons on her parking lot concern and the maintenance of the property and Mrs. Lyons raised an excellent point to maintain the parking lot. Commissioner Polk agreed that the condition of the parking lot is of concern to the businesses, including maintenance.

Commissioner Bowen requested that the Toll Brothers sign be taken down on the Berlin turnpike.

Commissioner Marsden voiced concern regarding the potholes on our streets and to whom should this problem be reported – highway garage, etc., and also the traffic light on Fenn Road, Holmes and Woodland Streets and Cedar and Main Streets.

Mr. Meehan referred to the budney Business Park letter sent to Mr. Knaus regarding the petition to terminate the restrictive covenants.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Bowen made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Chick seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:10 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Sophie Glenn
Recording Secretary

